

Maintenance Failures at Cairngorm and HIE's Irresponsibility

Description



While HIE has refused to release the engineering report into the funicular it has said that *“piers need strengthened and realigned, beams need strengthening, and all bearings need replaced on the piers*

Highlands and Islands Enterprise, as owners and custodians of the Cairn Gorm Estate, have full responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the public assets that lie within the estate.

In an article published in the Press and Journal on Thursday 16 May 2019 headed “Cairngorm funicular report held up over potential legal action” ([see here](#)):

“A source told the P & J that legal implications relate to the responsibility for maintenance to the Funicular”.

It appears that HIE are using the possibility of legal action against Natural Retreats to justify why they continue to refuse to release the details of the long awaited engineering report into the state of the funicular.

How then have HIE discharged their responsibility for the maintenance of other public assets on the hill?

Over 7 months ago Parkswatch highlighted the lack of maintenance to the exterior of the Daylodge building and its environs ([see here](#)). That post identified many maintenance issues and made it clear that HIE were failing to ensure that their tenant was adhering to the terms of their lease agreement in respect of maintenance.

This post takes a close look at the condition of this area today now that HIE have had full control of the hill business since late November 2018, a period of time that’s approaching 6 months

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The impression given to visitors does not seem to be a matter of concern to HIE.

Visitors to the area are immediately met with clear signs of decay and dilapidation. The retaining wall at the corner of the Daylodge has deteriorated further over the winter and is in a state of collapse. Nothing whatsoever has been done by way of repair over the last 7 months. It is worth noting that this wall is adjacent to the ironworks sculptures at the top of the Carpark and is also where most people, en route to the Northern Corries Footpath would pass.

Following the disabled access path around the building leads to further dilapidation



The path is in such a poor state of repair that it has now been closed off and it's clear that the dwarf



The steps at the top of the [closed] pathway are also barriered off. That's because they are unsafe a

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Another area that's crumbling away with loose stones all round.....so bad that it too has been closed



This wall is also falling to bits and a large piece of Granite has been dislodged.



A crumbling section of pathway.



It isn't difficult to see how dampness will get into the building from here.



Rotten wood which can only become unsafe, if it isn't already.

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The pathway at the top [rear] of the Daylodge.

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Missing stonework at the window into the ski workshop

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Collapsing stonework next to the steps into ski hire

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The Fire Exit from the café. The door is rotten and should be replaced immediately.

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Broken drain between the Daylodge and the Funicular Station



Vegetation on the window ledge outside the Retail Shop. That's exactly how the mortar gets loosened.

The entire area around the Day Lodge is a dilapidated disgrace and those responsible for allowing it to degrade to this condition should hang their heads in shame.

HIE are fully responsible for failing to ensure that the tenant that they appointed to operate the area was complying with the lease terms and effecting all necessary maintenance. It was clearly obvious, last year, that no maintenance was being done and yet HIE did absolutely nothing about it. They've allowed public assets to deteriorate to a point where the repair bill is going to be large and it will require to be funded from the public purse.

We now have a situation where the area isn't fit to be visited by anyone. The local and wider tourist economy can well do without visitors taking away the impressions of decay and dilapidation that will follow from a visit to Cairngorm.

What is being done then? While the Daylodge and Environs are in such a state, HIE are proposing to build a Kids Adventure Zone ([see here](#)) in the lower Cas car park. There has been no consultation with the Funicular Response Group, the Aviemore and Glenmore Community Trust, the local community or any other stakeholder group which is what we've come to expect from an organisation that is institutionally arrogant because it is never held to account by the Scottish Government. In addition, HIE are taking forward the bizarre plans for redevelopment of the Ptarmigan building [these will come up for decision by the CNPA Planning Committee at their meeting on Friday 24 May] at a time when they cannot tell the public when the Funicular will next operate.

What should happen now

1. The Scottish Government need to intervene now and remove HIE from all operational and strategic involvement at Cairngorm. The ongoing debacle will not cease until that happens.
2. A full enquiry must be held that will lay bare HIE's gross incompetence.
3. The Daylodge, Daylodge environs and the car parks must be brought up to a fit for purpose state of repair.
4. The Local Community and all Stakeholder and Community Group must be fully consulted and involved with respect to the development of a short, medium and long term plan for the redevelopment of the hill business.

Category

1. Cairngorms

Tags

1. Cairn Gorm
2. HIE
3. Local communities
4. natural retreats
5. Scottish Government
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